Improvement of runway at Silchar Airport

470. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that runway at Silchar Airport is not fit for airbus and the pilots are reluctant to land on the airport due to poor conditions; and

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking to improve/upgrade the runway at Silchar Airport?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) The existing length of runway (5850 ft) is inadequate for operations by Airbus 320 class of aircraft.

(b) There is a proposal to strengthen and extend the length of runway from 5850 feet to 7200 feet to make it suitable for Airbus 320 operations. A sum of Rs. 46.65 lakhs stands deposited with the State Government of Assam since August, 1999 for acquiring and handing over of 33 acres of land for this project.

Undue favour to licensees and double concessions to private parties

471. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the observation made by CAG the migration package has amounted to "Undue favour to licensees and double concession" to private phone companies; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) A Draft Audit Para titled "package of concessions to existing Cellular and Basic Telephone Service Operators" was received from Director General of Audit, Post and Telecommunications.

(b) The Government have not accepted the observations made in the Draft Audit Para. A reply was sent to Audit indicating the